Interview with William D. Rogers

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

UNDER SECRETARY WILLIAM D. ROGERS

Interviewed by: Stanley I. Grand

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Q: Why don't you give us a quick, brief summary of your background, and then we can go on from there. Okay?

ROGERS: Princeton University, School of Public and International Affairs, graduated in 1948; Yale Law School, graduated in 1951. I clerked for one year with Charles Clark on the Federal Court of Appeals, and one year for Stanley Reed in the U.S. Supreme Court; and then I joined Arnold & Porter, the law firm in Washington. At that time, with eight other people in the firm, I immediately went to work on the Owen Lattimore case which involved the question “who lost China”; and McCarthy's attacks that China was lost as the result of the great international conspiracy involving Owen Lattimore and a number of communist groups in the Department of State.

In the course of the mid-'50s I began to work with Ted Moscoso, who was at that time the administrator of the Economic Development Administration in Puerto Rico. My responsibilities included a number of legal matters for the Economic Development Administration involving shipping, air transportation, contracts for investment in Puerto Rico, and so forth, which got me interested in the process of economic development

in Latin America. Then that all was the background, basic to my appearance in public service.

Q: Mr. Rogers let me interrupt. Would you like to talk a little bit about your Foreign Service interest that might have developed during the time you were involved in the Lattimore case?

ROGERS: The Lattimore case essentially was perhaps the great case in American judicial history involving a testing of the responsibility for the management of our foreign policy. By 1949 China had fallen under the grip of the communists and there was a large outcry in the Congress and in the press attempting to place responsibility for the so-called loss of China, and McCarthy, in a rather remarkable moment in American political history, made foreign affairs a colossal issue with the public of the United States; denounced Lattimore as the senior Soviet espionage agent in the country, and proceeded to inspire two very extended Congressional hearings into his loyalty, essentially, his patriotism, and his commitment to the communist cause, and the extent to which he had been responsible for the development in China—the overthrow of the Chiang Kai-shek regime by the communists.

Our law firm was defending him against first, the charges in the two long Congressional hearings that he had been responsible, and that he was inspired to his responsibility by a commitment to the communist cause around the world. And later, after the Congressional hearings were completed and the perjury charges were filed against Lattimore we defended him in court against the two perjury indictments. But the essential gravamen of the cases, both of the Congressional and in the judicial level was, foreign policy of the United States.

Q: You met Teddy Moscoso, and got involved with him when he was running the Puerto Rican development program, and then why don't you go on from there briefly?

ROGERS: Yes. It was obvious—couldn't ignore the fact—that the problems of poverty, the difficulties of economic development in Puerto Rico were mirrors of the general problem of poverty and lack of economic development throughout the hemisphere. I had nothing in my experience in the law firm, up until 1961 and the election of Kennedy, that was essentially international in terms of representing any international clients. It was only the accident of the fact that Moscoso was brought in to run the Alliance for Progress by Kennedy in late 1961—he was sworn in in December of 1961—that led to my engagement in the Agency for International Development.

It happened in a rather interesting way. Moscoso had been appointed by Kennedy as Ambassador in Venezuela shortly after Kennedy's inauguration in early '61. This was, frankly, a mistake. It was a mistake based on a naive notion that Latin Americans would appreciate having the United States represented in their countries by Puerto Ricans. Quite the opposite was true. The idea for most Latin Americans that the United States would be represented by people from Puerto Rico was not a very popular one. They regarded Puerto Rico as essentially an outlying area of great dependency and Puerto Ricans as not apt representatives of the central power structure of the United States. So Moscoso's appointment as ambassador in Venezuela was not a happy moment in the Kennedy administration. He didn't last very many months. There was, in fact, a lot of protest against Moscoso's appearance in Venezuela; and indeed, they even burned his car when he went up to the campus of the University of Venezuela—a student protest. But for good affirmative reasons, as well as the negative reason that his appointment in Venezuela was not happy, Kennedy brought him back, nominated him as the first coordinator of the Alliance for Progress, which at that time had been ballooned into a great new initiative of United States foreign policy in Latin America, as indeed it was. So it was a very important appointment.

Moscoso was brought back, he had a long conversation with Kennedy in the White House, and then was to be sworn in, in what was then called the Fish Room, which now I believe

is called the Roosevelt Room. I was invited along with Abe Fortas to attend Moscoso's swearing-in. We went down there one afternoon and Moscoso and the President appeared from the Oval Office into the Fish Room—a large crowd of reporters and hangers-on, and friends and well-wishers were there for the swearing- in, which was remarkable enough to be done in the White House which emphasized and underlined the importance that Kennedy attached to the Alliance for Progress and to the Moscoso appointment.

Anyway, Moscoso, at the ceremony just before he was to be sworn in, came across the room and asked me if I would join him in the Alliance. It was embarrassing and rather disorienting, the whole idea. He was then sworn in, we finished the ceremony, I went back to the office, called my wife and said, “May I bring Ted Moscoso home for dinner? He has asked me a terribly important question.” She said, “What is it?” I said, “He wants me to come into government with him in the Alliance for Progress.” So she said, “Well, I suppose so.” She had known him very well, and they liked each other very much. Anyway, when I finally brought him home for dinner that night to discuss the matter, she greeted him at the door by saying, “You son of a bitch, Ted. How could you do this to us?” Well, one thing led to another, and I agreed to go into the Alliance for Progress with Moscoso, which was organized as a kind of ambiguously autonomous entity in the AID agency within the State Department.

Q: Can I ask you, when you went in to work for the Alliance, what kind of differences did you find between government and private practice? And what kind of adjustments did you require in terms of your methods of operation, your client relationship, and so forth?

ROGERS: The adjustments were quite profound. As a lawyer my responsibilities involved just a very few people in my law office, and the relationship of the law office with one single client. And that client was usually represented by one person, or maybe two, in any particular enterprise that we were representing. The government is a vastly more complex process, and when I began with the Alliance, I was special counsel of the Alliance, which meant that I was the lawyer for Moscoso and the Latin American wing of the AID agency.

But I was in a sense both client and counselor, or lawyer. I also had to get used to the idea that I was an integral part of a very large organization of hundreds of people, or at least several scores of people, who were involved in the Latin American AID agency, and were only part of a much larger agency. There were constant, if not conflicts, at least differences of interest between the Latin American regional bureau and the AID agency itself. And beyond that, in a larger context, between the AID agency and other branches of government. For example: the Department of Defense, the Department of Treasury, the Department of State which did not feel by any means that it was an identical carbon copy of the AID agency, and the White House.

The consequence was that one was dealing in a puzzle, in a complex decision-making process, which was vastly more complicated. And one was dealing with it in a much more ambiguous way, not only as legal adviser to the manager of the Latin American AID agency, but also in a sense as his defender and a member of his team vis- a-vis his relationships with the rest of the agency, and with the other departments of government. So essentially, a very different kind of existence.

Q: Tell us a little bit about Moscoso as a manager.

ROGERS: Well, there were those schooled in more traditional management styles who found his management too intuitive, too impatient with details, and too willing to make it up as he went along. My own evaluation was that he was a spectacular manager in the ways which were essential to being a good manager at that moment in time, and in that particular operation. Mind you, we were building what we conceived to be at the time a very new organization, with a very new mission, quite a radical and progressive mission, of supporting economic and political development in Latin America in a very big way. Lots of money was on the table. We had resources of approximately a billion dollars from various pockets. The sense of urgency was overwhelming, in part inspired, of course, by the apparent conflict between the United States and communism in the hemisphere led by the Cubans who were present in a number of countries within Latin America. The sense

of imminent disaster hung heavily over us. We constantly reminded ourselves that we were one minute to midnight, and that the collapse of government institutions before the onslaught of the communists could occur elsewhere in Latin America as it already had in Cuba. So there was a great sense of urgency, and vitality, and necessity, and imperative, about the effort of the Alliance for Progress in those days.

Moscoso brought to that challenge a overwhelming sense of getting the job done, any way that it could be done, and a great capacity to transmit that sense of urgency, and possibility, to all the people that worked with him. He was a very inspiring man. He had been an inspiring man in the Economic Development Administration in Puerto Rico which he'd created out of whole cloth on his own. And he was, I think, an inspiring figure of leadership in the early days of the Alliance for Progress at the same time. It's easily said that his attention to detail was not that of some of the great alleged managers in the world, but for my taste, he was the right person at the right time and, I think, made a colossal articulation and design of the Alliance for Progress.

Q: One of your first legal assignments outside the United States on the Alliance was to handle a problem in the Dominican Republic. Would you like to tell us how you managed to handle that, and some of the personalities that were involved?

ROGERS: Yes. Almost the first thing that I was asked to do was to accompany a team of two or three other much more experienced AID personnel to the Dominican Republic in January of 1962. The Dominican Republic had been a much vexed part of the world for us, and it had recently gone through the great trauma of the end of the Trujillo administration; the effort by his family to hold on to the last vestiges of power after the old man was assassinated; the appearance on the horizon of the U.S. fleet built around the Boxer; threats of rebellion, revolution, rumors of communist involvement, etc. It was a very turbulent place in January of 1962, and one of the first things that Moscoso decided to do under the Alliance was to try to buck up the very small junta of three people who

had suddenly found itself in charge of affairs to the extent that anybody could be in the Dominican Republic.

So the three of us got on the airplane, flew down to the Dominican Republic in January, and if I recall correctly, we had the very next day a meeting with the junta in which we offered to provide 10 million dollars of very quick money, essentially for balance of payment support, so that they could get the wheels of government started again. The response was, that if they accepted an amount of money as low as 10 million dollars, they would be strung up on the lamp post outside the government palace where we were meeting them, and they told us to go back and get 25. We went back to what was then the embassy, although there was no ambassador at the time, there was only a charg# d'affaires, and sent off a telegram reporting on our meeting with the junta, and requesting authorization to increase the offer from 10 million to 25 million. Nothing happened. It turned out that there was a big snowstorm in Washington, and half the people couldn't get into the State Department, so it was impossible to make a decision. No decision can be made without 50 people. The consequence was that the team had to cool its heels in the Dominican Republic for several days. The other members of the team, smarter than I was, decided they were going to go back to Washington even though no decision had been made. So they peeled off one by one, and suddenly at one point, I found myself all alone, still without any answer to our request for 25 million dollars. So I asked the charg# to tell the junta that I was going to go home too, we couldn't get an answer, and the junta essentially said, no, you can't leave. In any event the charg# was deeply impatient about this. I remember him screaming into the telephone, which was not a very effective method of communication in those days between Washington and the Dominican Republic, that he could get the whole fleet of the United States Navy quicker to his aid than he could get a mere pittance of 25 million dollars. But we finally got the authorization, and made the proposal to the Dominican junta which they accepted, and the 25 million dollars was, I think, one of the very first AID grants that the Alliance for Progress made.

Q: How did the combined bureau concept work? Who had the control, State or AID, and would the Alliance have been better outside of State and AID both?

ROGERS: Well, that debate raged vigorously throughout the '60s. I saw it again in a different guise when I went back into the Department in the 1970s. The issue of the relationship of State and AID has always been a vexed one. My own feeling is that the correct organization ought to reflect the personalities involved. Frankly, at that time, you had a uneasy personal relationship between, first on the one hand, Moscoso and Ed Martin—Ed Martin being the Assistant Secretary of State; and then later on, after Kennedy's assassination and Lyndon Johnson's appearance on the scene, the Assistant Secretary became Tom Mann. Both of those State Department officers, although very experienced and wise in their ways, were not people who shared the same kind of enthusiasm, and energy, and vigor, that Moscoso did. And the same attitudes, I think, were reflected up and down the teams that worked with those two men. The State Department tended to be much more conservative, both politically and procedurally. Whereas the gang that Moscoso had brought into the Alliance for Progress were very gung- ho, Marine Corps kind of high optimism, let's go get them sorts of people. And the tension, consequently, was really quite strong.

My own view, on the other hand, is that in terms of structure, if one can solve the personality problem of the leadership—AID was then and is a fundamental, indeed maybe even commanding, aspect of our foreign policy. Or to put it more correctly, that the development objective, particularly in Latin America, is such a dominant target for U.S. policy in the hemisphere, that it's hard for me to conceive an effective foreign policy from which the AID development machinery is absent. I'm instinctively on paper in favor of integration. But I was unhappy with the integration in the early days of the Alliance to the extent that the conflicting attitudes about the program between State and AID held back the aid effort.

Q: Can you give us some examples of how these conflicting attitudes...moving into the time, for example, when you became the Deputy U.S. Coordinator for the Alliance, can you give us some examples of how these attitudes did tend to negatively affect the Alliance operations?

ROGERS: Well, probably not. My memory doesn't produce any real details about specific projects where the conflict resulted in a delay of something that AID wanted to do.

Q: Well, tell us a little bit about Tom Mann, for example, and your relationship with him, as compared, for example, with your relationship with Moscoso.

ROGERS: Mann was, I think, Stanley, a person who had well- developed attitudes about Latins. Although he was as un-Latin as any Foreign Service officer one could ever run into, he fancied that he understood the Latin temperament, and that the way to get something was to be extremely direct, and to put the bargain on the table, and to brook no effort to fudge the issue. Whereas Moscoso, being a Latin, and indeed an extremely congenial and cordial one, his temperament was exactly the opposite. And they brought those conflicting temperaments to the table on every policy issue that came along. The consequence is that Mann was inclined in each instance, and particularly with the Mexicans where he had been the ambassador, to be much tougher, and uncompromising than Moscoso and the Alliance, I think, was inclined to be. This really, I think, precipitated an essential conflict which made Moscoso's indefinite presence around there impossible to conceive.

The culminating issue, if I recall correctly, had to do with the power that was to be given to the Committee for the Alliance for Progress, CIAP, which had emerged out of the Rio conference of the Alliance in 1963 just before Kennedy's assassination. Moscoso's position was to delegate enormous authority, if not ultimate authority, over the disposition of U.S. assistance to the Inter- American group. This to Mann was an anathema, or I should go back and say it was anathema to Ed Martin who was Assistant Secretary at that particular moment. Anyway, that conflict between how much authority and delegation the

United States ought to provide to the CIAP held over after the Kennedy assassination, and the appointment of Tom Mann, and essentially, I think, reflected the fundamental tension that at the end of the day forced Moscoso out of office.

Q: Can you tell us about the Congressional and White House relations during the time you were U.S. Deputy Coordinator and particularly the changes after JFK and something about LBJ's approach to the Alliance?

ROGERS: Well, I think the first thing to be said is that it was then, and remains to me, remarkable what prominence and priority both Kennedy and Johnson gave to the Alliance. Kennedy spoke of it at every press conference without any question, and each time he spoke about it, it served to reemphasize his emphatic insistence that the United States had a deep and abiding interest in the promotion of economic development and political democracy in the hemisphere. And I have no doubt that he felt that very deeply. LBJ carried that over, although I don't think he had quite the, if you will, progressive sophisticated understanding of the process that President Kennedy had. Nevertheless, it was remarkable to me that the very first meeting that he had in the White House, after the assassination, was his meeting with the ambassadors of Latin American countries in which he pledged the continuation of the Alliance for Progress.

It was a very touching meeting because Mrs. Kennedy herself attended, much to, if you will, the surprise of the Latin American ambassadors. But it was a moving ceremony, and it demonstrated as dramatically as anything could have, the continued importance that Johnson was going to give to the Alliance.

Now in terms of relationships with the White House, however, it was really rather curious. Kennedy had a habit of getting on the phone and talking with people, not just Assistant Secretaries which was unheard of in most administrations, but he would even call desk officers from time to time when he had a particular interest in an issue. He also did something which I don't think has been done very often, and that is to appoint Dick

Goodwin, who was then a major confident of Kennedy's, and speech writer, of course, to a position of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State to Ed Martin, who was then the Assistant Secretary. This was a rather surprising, and unstable, situation because Martin and the rest of the State Department team tended to regard Goodwin as kind of an interloper, also someone who didn't know very much about Latin America, and who was dangerously radical in his thinking. Goodwin had brought back from the meeting at Punta del Este the reputation of having been a fellow who broke all the rules of U.S. diplomacy by meeting with Che Guevara, who was the Cuban representative at the Punta del Este meeting, from which the Alliance for Progress emerged.

In any event, Kennedy was very intrusive, if you will, both in terms of his willingness to talk directly to officials at every level, and also by sending Goodwin over.

Johnson was quite different. He grabbed Mann out of Mexico. He must have known him really quite remarkably well. Put him in the job, and essentially gave full delegation to Mann for running the Department, running the foreign policy of the U.S. in Latin America, and for managing the Alliance for Progress.

Q: How did you and Dick Goodwin get along during the time that you were the Deputy Coordinator?

ROGERS: I think quite well. I found Dick sympathetic in the sense that he shared the Moscoso instinct that we had to get on with the job, and get things done. There were, I think, a couple of times when Goodwin displayed his impatience with legal restraint, and which we ended up kind of head to head where he was urging Moscoso to do something without regard to what the law said. In fact, I do recall him saying at one point, impatiently dismissing my legal caveat with respect to some course of action, by saying, “Oh, for heaven's sake, we break the law a hundred times a day around here.” But, in terms of his commitment to the purpose of the Alliance, and the desire to get on with the job, I found him a very sympathetic personality. Interesting, romantic, not somebody that I would want

to make trustee with full responsibility for a particular program, but certainly someone who was there to ensure that it maintain the momentum that President Kennedy wanted it to have.

Q: Early on in the Alliance, what were the relationships with such international organizations as the IDB, the OAS, and the World Bank, and should they have been expanded in the future?

ROGERS: Well, I think the relationship with the IDB was a very close one. The IDB was just getting started at that point, was administering the Social Progress Trust Fund. It was finding its way, but there were a lot of coincidence between what the IDB was prepared to do, and what we were prepared to do. I think the World Bank relationship was somewhat more tenuous, the World Bank tended to be a more traditional project financier. The relationship with the fund was even more attenuated— International Monetary Fund— because even then the fund was committed to ensuring prudence in economic programs, and this sometimes was in conflict with the effort to get on with the provision of assistance to Latin America.

I think as a generality, it's fair to say in response to your question, Stanley, that we worked at, but never by any means completely resolved the issue of how best to relate these various organizations.

Q: You didn't mention the OAS, and its role at that particular time.

ROGERS: Well, the OAS, I suppose one could say, manifested its presence in a couple of ways. On the one hand, it attempted by various meetings to articulate the importance of economic development, and the way to get at it; what to do about land reform; and tax reform; and management of budget deficits; etc. On the other hand, it purported to be the forum within which policy ought to be articulated with respect to major political developments. The early '60s were marked by a considerable number of military coups, and the effort was made, through the OAS, to define how to respond to those military

coups. Never very successfully, and in fact, I think it's fair to say that with respect to the need to have an Inter-American organization which would set policy with respect to major political developments in the hemisphere, the OAS at that point was an essential failure.

It did serve to be the forum through which policy towards Cuba was articulated, but not, in my judgment, with total success. And when I was back in the State Department in the '70s one of our major objectives was to dismantle the required embargo on trade between the nations of Latin America and the United States which had been imposed by the OAS under the leadership of the United States, in the 1960s.

Q: Before we leave your role as Deputy U.S. Coordinator for the Alliance, two things: one, many people made the point that the reason for the Alliance was Fidel Castro. Many people in Latin America made that point. So I would like you to comment on that. Would there have been an Alliance without Fidel, for example. And two: any other general remarks you'd like to make about your term in office as U.S. Coordinator for the Alliance?

ROGERS: As for the first, I suppose, if you asked it as you asked it, would there have been? Probably not, if Fidel hadn't come along. Latin America would not have had the urgency, the sense of peril to U.S. interest, that it eventually had. I like to think, however, that we would have found our way towards a program of effective support for development. It might have been more moderate, and more gradual, but it didn't just begin with Fidel. The proposals for a more coordinated effort to attack poverty in the hemisphere antedated Fidel's arrival in Havana. And I would like to think, as I say, that we would have come to something like the Alliance even without Fidel. I think we would have continued to maintain it as well, had it not been for Vietnam. I think that it was remarkable to me in the late '60s—I left office in the State Department as Deputy U.S. Coordinator in 1965, after the Dominican intervention—it was remarkable to me, however, as I added it up, that even up to Nixon's inauguration in January of 1969, the Alliance for Progress was the one policy, one foreign policy in the United States, which had been maintained consistently throughout the '60s. Our policy throughout the rest of the world had changed

quite radically. In Europe, vis-a-vis the Soviet Union; vis-a-vis China and Japan; and in Africa; but the one constancy of our foreign policy throughout that period was the Alliance for Progress. And I think that reflected what was then emerging in the '60s as a general sense, that we had a deep interest in the development, and growth, of the hemisphere, and that we needed to do something about it.

Q;Okay, let's move on now to...you left the Department, and you became president of the New York Center for Inter- American Relations for a period of time. During that period you wrote a book, and we'll get to the book later, but first tell us something about what the Center did in New York, and your role.ROGERS: The Center, I should be clear, it was only a part- time activity. I was the president, but I went back to the law firm essentially, and I went to New York a couple of days a week to head up the Center. At the time, the Center was nothing, except a wreck of a building which had been the Russian embassy in New York. It was the embassy from which Khrushchev had gone out on the balcony, and lectured the students at Hunter University to great acclaim and fanfare during his famous shoe-pounding trip to the United Nations General Assembly. We, the Center, took over the building, largely through the efforts of the Rockefeller family, and I spent most of my time the first year around raising money to refurbish it. At that time, I think, it ran about $l.5 million dollars. We opened the Center to great fanfare, Hubert Humphrey, the Vice President at the time, came up; and Nelson Rockefeller, the Governor of New York at the time. It was a very big opening. The Center was essentially dedicated, and continues now to be dedicated to, the expansion of understanding in New York of Latin America- -Latin American arts, culture, political developments. It is the seed of, and has been from the beginning and continues to be, the seed of a lot of policy events, lectures, talks, meetings with Latin Americans. It has an art gallery in it, and features a large number of exhibitions of Latin American art. It is a place which symbolizes what we attempted to demonstrate to people of Latin America. That is, that there are people in the United States who do care about Latin America. I think it has been remarkably successful in that respect.

Q: Did the Center have any relations with the government in terms of Latin American operations, or policy?

ROGERS: No. The Center was a totally private organization. It's completely privately funded. It is now affiliated with the Council of the Americas which is a business organization. The Council of the Americas uses the Center's building, but it's entirely private in terms of its commitment to the arts, to business, economic commercial relationships, and political developments.

Q: I'd like now to talk a little bit about the book which you wrote on the Alliance in 1967. One of the things that you talked about a great deal was the importance of the people involved in the Alliance, and I'd like you to talk about some of your personal relationships with some of the people like Campos, Prebisch, Kubitschek, Dillon, and Milton Eisenhower, or any others that you think were key in terms of the original Alliance getting off the ground.

ROGERS: I think it's impossible to divorce the Alliance, or any important political development from the people involved in it. Carlyle was essentially right: History is the shadow of a man. I've mentioned the influence of Moscoso who really translated the Alliance idea into an institution, and a practice, and the movement of a lot of money, and physical demonstration in the form of new school buildings, and roads, and houses, and water systems. He was proof that there was a sense in the United States that it was important to support the development efforts in the hemisphere.

But by the same token the Latin American leadership which emerged during that period, I think, was equally remarkable in many ways, even though it was a drastically difficult period; what with the political retrogressions that occurred in country after country. Nevertheless, there were a number of figures who stood out as important leaders in the hemisphere. It was exciting in the sense that what was basically a U.S. initiative; it was Kennedy's idea; it was Kennedy's proposal; it was Kennedy who moved the idea forward

in the meeting at Punta del Este. Nevertheless, the Latins responded in a very important way. You mentioned Kubitschek, it was Kubitschek and Lleras Camargo who essentially had put together one of the first proposals for the Alliance concept of a community-wide effort to support development. Roberto Campos was the very dynamic Brazilian ambassador in the United States who pushed very hard—he was a brilliant economist, and still is—pushed very hard for moving Alliance projects forward in Brazil as rapidly as possible, and continued that effort even after the military coup on April 1st, 1964.

To name several other major Latin American figures. Felipe Herrera was the president of the Inter-American Development Bank, a very dynamic, attractive, interesting, sensible fellow. And the Colombian, Carlos Sans De Santa Maria who was the head of CIAP was also a very inspiring Latin American leader, committed to the concept. These were essentially democratic people, before their age, but people who, I think, foreshadowed the remarkable resurgence in the late '80s and '90s of political democracy, and prudent broad-based market opening economic development policies.

Q: One of the points you made in your book was that the Alliance was not a success certainly in 1967 concerning permanent institutional change. Do you feel it accomplished any permanent changes today? And was there enough time for it to do it then?

ROGERS: No, there wasn't enough time. That is not to say that our impatience in the '60s was unjustified, or inappropriate. We were all impatient then for the development of effective institutions which would push economic growth, and social justice, political democracy. It took a long time. We are now at a vantage point in history where we can look back and say so much of what we had hoped for in Latin America is now being accomplished. Democracy is the rule virtually everywhere. There are still instabilities, difficulties, questions about its future, reverses from time to time, but the sense of tangible progress along the lines staked out in the Alliance for Progress in terms of economic growth, and social equality, and political democracy, I think are perfectly evident. The

fact of the matter is, however, that what we talked about in the early 1960s, we're only beginning to see truly become embedded in concrete in the 1990s.

Q: Do you still feel that integration is the answer for Latin America? Look at such things as the Central American Bank today, for example.

ROGERS: My own present view is that we ought to struggle for not only a subregional integration of, for example, Central America or the Mercosur countries of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. We also ought to struggle for a regional integration effort such as that envisioned by the Enterprise Initiative. That is to say, a free trade zone for all of the hemisphere. But that these subregional and regional integration movements find their ultimate justification in the success of the Uruguay Round, which is essentially an integration movement for the whole world and treats of issues not only related to trade exchange between the nations of the world, but also market openings in a number of other fields—intellectual property, dispute resolution, etc. In other words, subregional and regional integration arrangements find a niche but only in the context of a world which is ruled by an open trading system.

Q: How do you feel today about the notion of Latin American governments doing economic planning?

ROGERS: Well, I think, what we've learned is that the concept of planning, which we talked about in the '60s, which was essentially an effort to rationalize, and understand—well, first to understand, and then make rational the allocation of resources in the public sector, made sense for the rather primitive, disordered, economies of Latin America at that time. But that now Latin American economies, having changed as radically as they have, for example, shifting from primary commodity production to non-traditional exports in country after country; being nowblessed with much more complex and sophisticated financial systems; that now the economic policy required for Latin America is policy of market opening. The reduction of government to those sectors and activities which are

essentially governmental, such as the provision of safety, health, schools, and basic infra- structure, and the freeing up of competitive market forces to manage the productive activities of each one of the countries of the hemisphere within the context of an open trading system for the whole hemisphere. So I think the kind of planning that we were talking about in its most extreme form in the early 1960s, has no role in Latin America today.

Q: You earlier alluded to the question of poverty, and in your book you made the point that urban and rural poverty was Latin America's most basic problem. Do you consider that to still be a valid notion?

ROGERS: Oh, yes, I do. In fact, even more valid. I think the most important failing of Latin America in the '80s and '90s has been the failure to address the profound social inequalities in the hemisphere, and the continued persistence of extreme poverty in all its manifestations—lack of education, lack of decent housing, lack of nutrition. All of them characteristics which became exacerbated during the debt crisis of the 1980s. I think the instabilities that occur in Latin America at the present time, in Venezuela and Peru, are largely the result of failure to address social disparities as effectively as Latin America has reformed its macroeconomic policies, and its political processes.

Q: In your book you made the point that you felt that the Foreign Service was inadequate in terms of their understanding of the importance, and the meaningfulness, of economics. How do you feel now?

ROGERS: My recent experience with the Foreign Service suggests that it has improved. That sounds patronizing, and I don't mean it to be that. I was Under Secretary for Economics, and I saw a lot of the State Department in terms of its economic capacity. I think in the '70s and '80s the general level of economic capability for the Department and the Foreign Service was considerably above what it was in the early 1960s. This is in part a reflection of the fact that we had had then 20-30 years of deep involvement in the

economic development of Latin America, and also of other nations as well. But I think it still has, frankly, a considerable way to go. And I'm not sure it's going that way in view of what I regard as the loss of a lot of economic responsibility from the State Department to Treasury and other departments of government.

Q: Aside from the points that we've already made, are there any other changes in your views that you put forth in your book that you'd like to comment about now?

ROGERS: No, I can't think of any, frankly because I haven't looked at the book lately. But I'm sure that whatever ideas I had then have changed quite radically since I wrote the book.

Q: Okay, let's go on to the time in 1974 when you returned to the government as Assistant Secretary of State. First of all, why did you decide to return to the government in 1974? And secondly, tell us a little bit about the difference between being an Assistant Secretary of State, and an AID Assistant Administrator.

ROGERS: Well, Stanley, how I ended up there was again somewhat curious. After I left the AID agency in June of 1965, I was called back in by George Ball for a brief period at the end of '65 and '66 to head up the Rhodesian task force, which culminated in a lot of meetings with President Johnson, and Ball, and Rusk, about how we should respond to the declaration of independence in Rhodesia. There was a lot of pressure by the British to invade, and they wanted our help, and essentially my job was to pull together analysis about what we ought to do about that. My recommendation was, we not invade. But in 1965 and 1966 I had a chance to see the Department from another standpoint, the African Bureau, and the seventh floor.

I went back to the law firm in 1966, and I got involved in the Center for Inter-American Relations in New York, and wrote some papers, and did some things about U.S. policy in Latin America. I also got a little bit involved in the anti-Vietnam war protests. I remember the first several times I saw Henry Kissinger was when he was defending Vietnam

policy. The first time, I think, he ever saw me was when I asked him a couple of nasty questions about Vietnam and Cambodia. In any event, it turned out that when Kissinger became Secretary of State, Jack Kubisch was the Assistant Secretary. Kubisch was the author, as I understand it, of a concept by which the United States would ask all of Latin America, what it, the United States, ought to do about Latin American policy. Frankly, in my judgment, one of the loonier ideas of American foreign policy culminated in a meeting in Tlaljaldco, Mexico City, which is the center for Mexican foreign policy — it's the State Department of Mexico, the district of Mexico City where the Mexican Foreign Ministry is housed—which turned out to be a disastrous meeting for the United States, as I understand it. I wasn't there. Quick to take the challenge, Latin America came back collegiately with least common diameter proposals that it could think of for the United States. A demand for vastly increased resource flows, a demand for all kinds of concessions with respect to trade and everything else. And it became a dialogue between Latin America and the United States, and essentially a confrontation. And indeed, it became so serious at the meeting that they couldn't agree on a final pronouncement for the meeting, and Kissinger left the meeting in a huff before even signing the final accord and left Larry Eagleburger there to try to work something out.

This meant that Kubisch's stock was not very high in the State Department at that point, and I think the decision was made to move him on to something else. I think he became ambassador to Greece at the time. He wanted to go out anyway. And I ran into him in the Department one day, and he waved me into his office, and said...no, that's not the correct.

Q: I think that's right.

ROGERS: I've forgotten which happened first. Anyhow, he said at one point, he was going to move on to an embassy, and why wouldn't I be a good replacement for him? And I sort of dismissed the idea. And also, Carl Maw who had been Legal Adviser to Kissinger —Kissinger had brought him down from New York where he was Kissinger's lawyer— asked me if I would be interested in becoming Legal Adviser. And Kissinger called me

up at one point, and I've forgotten whether he asked me to be one or the other. I think he asked me to be Assistant Secretary, and I told him no. This was during the final days of the Nixon administration. I said that I really wasn't interested. He called me up again, in fact, the day Nixon left office, and said, “Nixon has now left, would you reconsider?” And I said, “Let me come down and talk with you.” That was a Friday afternoon, I think Nixon left town on Friday. And I went in to see Kissinger on Saturday, and I took all the things that I had written about U.S. policy in Vietnam. And I said, “I'm not going to answer the question whether I'm prepared to join the State Department until you read everything that I've written about your policy in Vietnam. And I also want you to know that I have been hearing rumors from up on the Hill, that the United States has been engaged in the destabilization of the Allende regime in Chile through the Central Intelligence Agency. I don't know whether this is true or not, and I'm not interested in what happened in the past, but I want you to know that if I come into the Department, I want to be given absolute assurances that anything that's done along the lines of CIA operations in Latin America I want to know about it. And if I'm not told about it, I'll resign.” So I said, “Let's not talk about it now, call me up on Monday and give me your reaction after you've had a chance to read these things and consider it.” So he called me back up, and he said, “Okay, I've read all this, and I don't regard your criticisms as overwhelmingly disqualifying. I want you to come in as Assistant Secretary.” And we discussed the matter, and Henry was very persuasive in terms of the need for the United States to get its act together in the wake of the collapse of the Nixon regime, and the weakening of the Presidency of the United States as the repository of our foreign policy. And he said he really wanted to put together the strongest team he possibly could, and he knew it would be a sacrifice, but would I come back? And I said that on that basis I would.

The essential reason for going back was that it was a crisis with the resignation of the President and our collapse in Vietnam occurring about the same time. The capacity of the United States to manage its foreign policy was really tested in that period of '74-'75,

even '76. So I found it an interesting challenge and accepted Kissinger's invitation for that reason.

Q: Again, what differences did you find between being Assistant Secretary of State as compared with being an AID Assistant Administrator?

ROGERS: Well, total, but here again personality comes in. I don't think I would have felt the difference so strongly had a Rusk been the Secretary of State in 1974. But the fact of the matter was that Kissinger was the Secretary of State, and he had more of the cards of our foreign policy in his hand than any Secretary of State in this century, and certainly since he was there. The fact of the matter was, that he ran the foreign policy of the United States. The National Security assistant was he for a long while, and was thereafter Brent Scowcroft who was essentially an agent of Henry's in the White House. He had very considerable sway over Bill Simon, who was Secretary of Treasury, and the various Secretaries of Defense, even including Schlesinger with whom he had a titanic battle which resulted in Schlesinger's departure. Henry ran foreign policy and so his agents, including me, really enjoyed a lot of free play which Assistant Secretaries didn't have under other kinds of Secretaries of State. And I think, had he been a more conventional Secretary of State with less of a monopoly over foreign policy, the two jobs would have been not that remarkably different. I would have spent a lot more time on details. Being Assistant Secretary though for Kissinger—incidentally, I ended up as the last one who was a political appointee. All of the other Assistant Secretaries for regional bureaus were professional Foreign Service officers. Henry had a great respect for professional Foreign Service officers, and used them very effectively when he got along with them, when they met his standards. But as Assistant Secretary working for him, I was essentially his extension, and I was doing the things that he wanted me to do rather than, if you will, the things which were in the job description.

Q: Briefly, what was Kissinger's attitude towards Latin America?

ROGERS: In the beginning when he became Secretary of State, he knew very little about it because Latin America had been marginal to the great national security issues of the day, as far away from Vietnam and Soviet-U.S. competition as you can imagine. It was distinctly marginal to his responsibilities as National Security assistant in the White House. When he got to the State Department he suddenly discovered Latin America. It was strange to him in the beginning, but he became, as the result of stringent educational effort, really quite romantically inclined towards Latin America. And he has said on a number of occasions—he did when he was Secretary of State, and he has said it since—that it is the place in the world where he feels most cordially welcome when he goes, and where he feels that he really is dealing with friends. He now has a very warm relationship with the hemisphere which has evolved over time, but certainly began during his tenure as Secretary of State.

Q: Would you tell us a little bit about the changes that you saw when you came back in 1974, or vis-a-vis 1967?

ROGERS: Well, I think most remarkable was the difference in the significance to our foreign policy of direct bilateral aid. By the time I got back in 1974 the Latin American economies had changed quite radically. They were then attracting massive capital inflows. The crisis of capital, which had been the inspiration for the financial side of the Alliance for Progress, had come to an end. So there was no very great need for direct bilateral assistance of any great consequence. There were a few countries where we had direct aid bilateral programs—Haiti; the basket cases. But basically, the development assistance at that point was all coming from the Inter-American Development Bank, and the World Bank. The development assistance process had been so regularized that it didn't present major policy questions. We might, on occasion, have a problem, for example, involving FMS assistance to Chile, which was disqualified because of the Pinochet regime at that time. By and large, questions of aid were not a terribly important part of the responsibility of the Assistant Secretary in 1974, as compared with the responsibilities of the Assistant

Secretary in the early '60s when the aid program was a massive part of his chores. That was one thing.

The other thing was the management of the political dialogue. At the time of the Alliance we had a policy. By the time I came back in '74 the policy had deteriorated to the point where, as I say, we had to organize this crazy new dialogue conference in Mexico just to find out what the Latins thought we ought to be doing. I scrapped that. The fact that I was anxious not to deal on a U.S. versus Latin America basis was one of the things that attracted me to Kissinger. I scrapped that program, and tried to deal with countries in their own terms, and that meant really redefining our relationship to Mexico as a separate set of policies; Brazil a separate set of policies; and Argentina, Chile, etc. So we ended up basically with a rather fractionated set of policies for each of the different countries in the region.

Q: Tell us a little bit about Central American developments on your watch. How were they handled here in the United States, and in Latin America, relationships with the White House and Congress during that period.

ROGERS: Central America was really nothing in terms of a policy issue compared to what it became in the 1980s. As I reflect back, I became a little bit involved in Central America policy in 1980 when I went down to Salvador for Carter in connection with the murder of the church women, and I represented Salvador in the world court case involving Nicaragua, and I did some other things. In Nicaragua I represented the Nicaraguan government after Somoza fell, in 1978-1979. In any event, I saw a lot of Central America in the '80s. It was a colossal problem. But in the mid '70s when I was Assistant Secretary, it was nothing. And I can still remember proposing to Kissinger that we eliminate all US bilateral assistance, starting with Central America. At that time, I think, we just had a few tens of millions of dollars going to Honduras as a matter of bilateral assistance. He overruled me on that. But the point illustrates how much of a non- problem Central America was. It was obviously not making great progress in terms of economic

development, but politically it had not deteriorated to the point it eventually did in the '80s. I think the most important problem that we faced in Central America was the Somoza issue; particularly our ambassador in Nicaragua at the time was a great Somoza crony. I think I spent as much time on the question of getting him out of there, as on all the rest of the Central American questions together. He had some real pals up in the Congress who were able to insinuate themselves into the Nixon White House. He had been such a great friend of Somoza that he and Somoza were on were on one of Nicaragua's stamps together.

Q: Who was that?

ROGERS: I can't remember his name, but he was a real terror. But in any event, we finally got him out and Jim Theberge was appointed. For some reason or other Nelson Rockefeller had taken a great fancy to Theberge, and had persuaded Henry to appoint him ambassador to Nicaragua to replace his predecessor whose name I've forgotten. Anyway, I insisted on going down with Theberge to present his credentials to Somoza, and introduce him to Somoza. I made it a point of emphasizing to Somoza that Theberge was down there with a mandate to be totally and scrupulously neutral on the political issues of Nicaragua. That this was going to be a new era in terms of U.S. diplomatic relationships with the Somoza regime, and that I was sure that Theberge understood his new mandate, and would honor it completely, and I was sure that the President would respect the mandate with which Theberge was encumbered in his ambassadorship. I think that started a new chapter in the relationship. It certainly also meant that I was perpetually unpopular with Somoza for the rest of his short life.

Q: Okay, let's move on now to the time when you became Under Secretary for Economic Affairs. Tell us a little bit about how this differed from being Assistant Secretary, and also tell us about some of the main U.S. economic problems during this period, and how they were handled.

ROGERS: Well, it wasn't entirely different because Henry didn't let me off the hook entirely as far as Latin America was concerned, although he insisted that the utterly able Harry Shlaudeman, whom he brought back to take my place, after Shlaudeman had been only a few months in Venezuela. Nevertheless, he insisted that I stay involved to a certain extent on Latin American affairs. And, indeed, I continued to travel with him to Latin America whenever he went down there.

But the wonderful thing about the Under Secretary's job in those days was that the State Department still had massive responsibility. It was only in the Carter administration that it gave great chunks of economic responsibility back over to Commerce and Treasury. So the Under Secretary had a big job. It was a fascinating job in the sense that one could pick and choose what one wanted to be involved in.

The issues that I worked on while I was Under Secretary included the White House economic policy coordinating committee, the designation of which I've forgotten at the moment, but which was very active in terms of functioning as the entity which was responsible for ensuring coherence in international economic policy. It was chaired by Bill Siedman, who eventually went on to great things. He was very effective at it, and I attended that faithfully as Henry's delegate which meant that I had a good deal of scope and clout in that. And I think that we ended up with a fairly coherent national economic policy generally. Number one.

Number two. The several currency crises that afflicted Europe. They included: the lira in Italy, the peseta in Spain, and most importantly, the pound sterling. The crisis of the pound sterling essentially involved the imposition on a somewhat willing English government of IMF prescriptions for the reduction of the budget imbalance in Britain. And the support by the United States of the IMF program in spite of colossal political pressure coming back from London against the United States on that score, directed towards Henry. That was the dominating economic problem at the moment. It looked like a full fledged crisis was

brewing in the currency field at the time, and it was only later that we realized that the IMF program had turned out to be a very great success.

Another issue was the depression in the United States and also the threat of a further oil price increase which was led by the Iranians in 1976. That led to a certain conflict of policy between me and Kissinger. I wanted to threaten to retaliate against the Iranians more strongly for their leadership towards a price increase in oil than Kissinger was prepared to support. It turned out that it became academic because the price increase didn't go forward.

We also had the big North-South Economic Conference in Paris where I headed the sub-ministerial delegation, and where we blunted the drive of the Group of 77 for commodity agreements and various other market rigging devices.

Also, at the time, I think back nostalgically to a proposal that I put together by which the United States, Japanese, the French, the Germans and the British, would all cooperate secretly to monitor lending to what was then the Soviet Union, and also trade relations with the Soviet Union on the theory that it was either good policy, or bad policy, to allow this rapid increase in the build-up of Soviet borrowing in the west; but we ought to decide whether or not it was rational, or irrational; whether it served our interests, or didn't contribute to our interest. It was a great idea, one that would have benefitted us enormously now if we'd put it into effect, but all the other countries said that they wanted to wait until after the election, and lo and behold the Republicans were not returned to office.

Finally, I spent a lot of time negotiating with the Cubans secretly, and also being Henry's front man on Southern African developments with respect to, again, Rhodesia and South Africa.

Q: Would you like to tell us some more, or not, about what kind of stronger steps you would have recommended vis-a-vis Iran? And would you like to talk a little bit about your negotiations with the Cubans?

ROGERS: On Iran, my basic proposal was that we cut out the military assistance that we were providing, if they raised the oil price increase. It would have been a very abrasive and tough policy, and it wouldn't have helped the Shah's position in any sense. He was obviously a lot weaker than we thought. Henry and I went out there shortly thereafter, and in fact, as I say, the issue became academic because I think largely as a result of Henry's persuasions, the Shah did not go forward with the oil price increase that he was threatening.

On Cuba, it was a great secret. We had had hints from the Cubans in '74 that they wanted to see an improved relationship. So Henry and I agreed that I would go and talk with them, at the same time as we made some unilateral gestures such as expanding the area within the United States that the Cuban diplomats could travel from the United Nations. We expanded it to 200 miles to include Washington. The consequence was that we were able to hold a number of secret meetings with the Cuban representatives, and we put before them—I typed up the paper and showed it to Henry on only one copy before I gave it to the Cubans—essentially a proposal which would lead to the normalization of relationships, e.g. exchange of ambassadors. The culminating moment, which Henry volunteered, was that I was authorized to offer a trip by Henry Kissinger to Havana to meet Fidel Castro in the event that all went well in this process. I thought it was an offer that they couldn't resist. It included all of the issues that were outstanding: nationalized property of United States citizens; what to do about the mines that had been taken over; sugar quota, etc. It was a very complete, and thorough, analysis of how we might, without exacting overt concessions from each other, march towards a more normalized relationship—culminating, of course, in the dropping of the embargo. And the Cubans looked at it, turned it upside down, and examined the bottom of it, and top, and went back two or three times,

and finally rejected it, which, I must say, was consistent with my general impression since then, that a normalization of relationship is something that Fidel Castro cannot accept, and will never accept any more than he will accept any liberalization of the internal regime within Cuba. He needs a confrontation with the United States.

Q: Would you like to comment any further about the U.S. relationship with Vietnam during this period? This is about three years after you came back to the Department in the first place and the situation was obviously deteriorating. Would you like to say anything about that in terms of your role, Kissinger's role, etc.?

ROGERS: I really was there only at the tail end of Vietnam. The point I attempted to make—we met every morning in staff meeting, and obviously Vietnam was an issue at every staff meeting, particularly when it culminated with the withdrawal of the United States, and the take over of South Vietnam by the North Vietnamese forces— my point had been that the world, at least the world that I knew, Latin America in particular, and elsewhere in Europe and Japan, were not so concerned about what was happening in Vietnam, but what was happening in the United States. If the failure in Vietnam produced a collapse of U.S. will and commitment, and engagement in the world, then the rest of the world would react. But if the United States stood fast with courage and continued commitment to the other issues in the world, even though it was thrown out of Vietnam, then I thought all would be well. Therefore, my argument was, don't panic as the result of the defeat in Vietnam, stand fast, continue to pursue constructive policies in the world on the other issues that we still have some leverage on, and that will be what the world is most interested in. It's more interested in Washington than it is in Saigon.

Q: Would you like to make any general comments about your job as Under Secretary, and why you left, if you'd like, etc.?

ROGERS: Well, I thought it was the most interesting job—the best job—in the Department of State at the time. As I've indicated, one had the pick of a broad menu of alternatives;

secret negotiations with the Cubans, a deep involvement with Henry's negotiations over Southern Africa, the sterling crisis. It was a dream of a job. It was a dream of a job also in part because there was no staff. I cut the staff down to the minimum number possible. I now gather they have such things as Deputy Under Secretaries. I thought that was a preposterous idea, and I had, I think, at the end of the day, two staff assistants—one on essentially political matters, and the other a real economist, Jessica Einhorn, who has gone on to be the financial vice president of the World Bank. They were very good, but they were also essentially duplicate eyes and ears. On the other hand, although one didn't have a staff to manage, one had complete access everywhere in the State Department. One could always whistle up the entire EB Bureau, Economic and Business Bureau, and we often did. They did all the staff work essential for any of the major economic issues that came along. And everybody else at the State Department was at the beck and call of the seventh floor. So it was in that respect an ideal job. But it was made ideal, as I've tried to indicate, because of the fact that I was working with Kissinger who really had the command and sway over U.S. foreign policy at the time, and hence the problems of negotiating with other agencies of government were much less serious than they are, I think, generally the case in periods both before and after the Kissinger regime as Secretary of State.

Q: You left the Department in 1977, and then there's a period of about six years before you came back into public visibility as the Counsel to the Bipartisan Committee on Central America. Before we get to the Commission, would you like to tell us, during that six year period, are there any special activities that you were involved in that had to do with foreign affairs?

ROGERS: All my work at the law firm—I went back to Arnold & Porter in January of '77—was international in one way or another. One of the matters that I worked on had to do with the representation of El Salvador in the world court case that Nicaragua brought against the United States. El Salvador was attempting to intervene. The court's denial of

that intervention was, I think, one of the most important aspects of misjudgment of the court in the Nicaraguan versus U.S. case.

Q: Could I interrupt? I don't think that many of us know when you say El Salvador was trying to intervene...tell us a little bit more about the case, would you please?

ROGERS: Nicaragua brought the suit against the United States charging that the United States had violated fundamental principles of international law by engaging in the use of force against Nicaragua, major elements of which, of course, were the mining of the harbor in Nicaragua, and the provision of assistance to the Contra forces. The court at the end of the day upheld the Nicaraguan claim that the United States had violated international law in the use of force against Nicaragua, wrongly, in my judgment. Salvador attempted to intervene. It did so at the behest of the United States, and it wanted to demonstrate to the World Court that Nicaragua itself was using force against Salvador by providing assistance to the Salvadoran rebels. And therefore, the United States was justified under the doctrine of collective security in assisting Salvador to defend itself by the use of United States force against Nicaragua. Salvador, in other words, wanted to come in and demonstrate that the United States action in Nicaragua was justified. The Court rejected Salvador's efforts to become a party to the case in what was essentially a very important judgment on the merits of the case because it held that Salvador's effort to demonstrate that it was under attack by Nicaragua was irrelevant to the proceeding of Nicaragua against the U.S.

Q: What was the time period for this?

ROGERS: The late '70s. I was also involved in the final approval by the Senate of the Panama Canal treaties. I had had a relationship with Torrijos of Panama. There were two treaties. The approval of the first treaty by the Senate was conditioned upon a resolution proposed by Senator De Concini, which essentially said that the United States had the right to intervene. It was the Senate's understanding that the treaty gave the United States the right to intervene in the political internal affairs of Panama. This drove the

Panamanians, starting with Torrijos, up the wall, and Torrijos was very inclined, when he heard about it, to denounce the treaties and withdraw. Our mutual common friends, particularly Ambassador Lewis from Panama, who was a great cohort of Torrijos, asked me to come to Panama urgently. I went down there and we talked, and I suggested that we try to resolve the problem by having the resolution of advice and consent on the second treaty correct the overstatement in the resolution of advice and consent on the first treaty. There was a lot of flurry of excitement about that. We negotiated a deal with the United States. I was acting with the approval of the U.S. as good offices for the two parties. I could not, because of my disqualification arising from my previous office in the State Department, be counsel to Panama, but I was able to function as good offices with the approval of the Legal Adviser of the State Department. And we worked out a provision in the resolution of advice and consent as I've said of the second treaty which essentially pacified Torrijos's reservations, clarified that the United States could not use force against the territorial integrity of Panama under the treaties, and this cleared the way for the final passage of the treaties. That was in Panama.

Well, I also ought to mention that I did a lot of work with the Carter State Department.

At the close of the Somoza regime, as I've said before, I was not one of Somoza's favorite people. In late 1978, the OAS, in part at the behest of the United States, proposed the appointment of three officials to act as good offices to resolve the dispute between Somoza and the rebels in Nicaragua. Warren Christopher called me up and said one day that the President wanted me to be the U.S. member of that team, and I replied that I would do that but only with the understanding from the President that I was going as his emissary, and that the sole purpose of the mission was to get Somoza out of Nicaragua, and get into Managua in his place a coalition government which would include not only the radicals, but also the considerable number of moderates who were part of the anti-Sandinista forces at the time. And I said that the President ought to allow me to make that very clear to Somoza, to offer him any inducement necessary to get him out of there, but to ensure that this happen, and that it happen before Christmas. I think I was talking

with Christopher about Thanksgiving time. In any event, Bill Jorden, who had been our ambassador in Panama, was at that time in Managua and was tasked to go in to talk with Somoza, and he did, and told Somoza that the United States was going to participate in the good offices effort sponsored by the OAS, and that the United States was going to appoint a great public servant who would bring to the effort great experience, and Somoza was very excited about it. And Jorden said, “That person is Bill Rogers.” And Somoza said, “In a pig's eye, not in my country he isn't.” Christopher called me up and told me this one morning about 6:30—I was still in bed- -but said, “Don't worry, we're going to go back to Somoza and tell him that he's got to accept you.” And I think, revealing my lack of enthusiasm for spending part of the Christmas season in Managua, Nicaragua, I said that I thought really that would be unwise for the United States; that anybody who was going to be a good offices representative needed the confidence of both sides in the dispute, so please you ought to consider withdrawing my name, which he did. They eventually didn't get any team down there until a number of months later, and by that time I think the opportunity was essentially lost. The war went on, Somoza was ejected by force, and by that time a lot of the moderates had been pushed to the sidelines by the Sandinistas. In any event, that was another thing that I was doing in international affairs at the time.

Then I went down to Salvador in late 1980 when the American church women were murdered, at President Carter's request, and I reported back to him on the situation there. The basic recommendation out of that was that the United States offer FBI and other assistance to the Salvadoran police so that they could pursue the matter to its conclusion, and bring the perpetrators of the crime to justice, a proposal which made some sense but never moved as rapidly as it really should have. So those are the foreign affairs things that I was doing in the '80s.

Q: Tell us now about the Bipartisan Commission. Why was it set up? What was the policy problem, both foreign and domestic? And what were the accomplishments of the Commission?

ROGERS: Well, it was a time of great controversy over our policy in Central America, both in terms of the Salvador conflict, and in terms of the Nicaraguan conflict. President Reagan decided that he wanted to appoint this bipartisan commission. I think there could have been several motivations: one, that it postponed the issue for a serious period of time. And the second was, that he truly wanted some real input into policy making. In any event, that's exactly what he got. It was a distinguished commission—Bob Strausse, Henry Cisneros, and a number of other people of serious capacity, chaired by Kissinger, and it was a very effective staff led by Harry Shlaudeman who did the immense work and was responsible for the drafting of the best parts of the report. We traveled everywhere, all over Central America, and the major countries on the Caribbean Basin who all, of course, had a deep and abiding interest in what was going on there. I remember we flew up along the coast of Nicaragua in a special airplane that the government made available to the commission, the day after the attack by the CIA-supported guerrillas on the oil refinery in Corinth, Nicaragua, with the smoke towering 20,000 feet up in the air. Ollie North was on the airplane with us, and he was almost ecstatic in his joy at seeing this evidence of damage done to the economic infrastructure of the country. In any event, the final report was written, as I say, a major part by Shlaudeman, but reflecting the views of this very distinguished group of members of the Commission.

I think the essence or the genius of the report, and I hold it in very high regard, was that it was the ultimate vindication, or expression, of the Alliance for Progress concept. That is to say that, number one, there is an essential inter-relationship between political development, and economic growth. The struggle for democracy in the hemisphere is most promising where there is promise of a better life for the people. By the same token, economic collapse leads to political deterioration—first point. The second point, the need to ensure that the efforts, both internally and externally in support of economic development and political change, are coordinated, and represent a collegiate judgment, rather than a bilateral determination by the United States alone. The consequence was that we proposed, I think, a very elaborate and farsighted system of consultation

and coordination between all of the interested parties—the U.S., Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, as well as the core- five Central American countries with respect to both the eligibility for foreign assistance, and the criteria for political development.

Q: What happened to the Commission's recommendations?

ROGERS: Well, it drove AID crazy because it would have taken money away, power, or responsibility, or authority away. And a consequence was, that although they were able to put out press releases saying that they embraced everything that the Commission was in favor of, in fact, the serious fundamental proposals for effective coordination and delegation of responsibility to a collegiate entity were gutted.

Q: You said it drove AID crazy, did you mean AID or did you mean State?

ROGERS: I meant AID

Q: Okay.

ROGERS: Yes, MacPherson, basically, the director of AID at the time. He was the most vigorous opponent of it.

Q: Why was he opposed to this?

ROGERS: Well, it would have extracted authority from AID, for the provision of assistance to Central America, and delegated major responsibilities to this inter-American entity. It was essentially a reprise of the CIAP debate that had occurred in 1964 in the United States. Now, I think there is another point to be made on this, and on this I fault Kissinger and myself. We finished the report, but we did not do what we should have done, and that is alert and trigger, and sensitize, the leaders in Latin America as to the importance of what was coming out of the report. And as to the need for them to respond affirmatively. This was something that had happened in 1961 with the Alliance for Progress, when Kennedy's proposals triggered a massively affirmative reaction by the leaders in Latin

America, and the consequence was the convening of the conference of Punta del Este. In the case of the Commission's report, we stopped the day after we reported to the President, and that was a great mistake because we did not organize and engineer a round of support and enthusiastic acceptance by the leaders in the hemisphere, and that, I think, is one of the reasons why it didn't eventually see the light of day.

Q: Okay. I'd like now to go into a bunch of general questions that really bring us up to date on some of your views as of today, or that go back to the time that we stopped, namely from 1984 on. First, what is your general view of the way we handle the Nicaraguan problem?

ROGERS: I think during the period of the Reagan administration the Nicaraguan problem was very badly mishandled. As I think I have indicated in my comments about the Bipartisan Commission, the response to Nicaragua was too much a unilateral policy by the United States. And we failed effectively to coordinate our effort with the other nations in Latin America. I think that was also true in Salvador. In any event, it is certainly the case that the law breaking tendencies of the administration manifest in Iran-Contra, which the Nicaraguan crisis inspired, were truly, not only misguided, but a distinct threat to the constitutional system in the United States. It's not often that foreign policy can create a constitutional crisis in this country, but that was one case in which it truly did. And I think we'll have to look back on the Nicaraguan policy during the Reagan administration as the classic example of a tragic, and misguided, foreign policy in the history of the nation.

Q: Sort of following up on this, you're one of the few people that's been a political appointee under four presidents, and one interim president too. I'd like to have your impressions of the difference between, in terms of operations, etc., between JFK, LBJ, Nixon, and the Carter and Reagan administrations. Well, there were four of them that you were involved with, Carter, and Reagan, yes, so there were five of them that you were involved in. If you would like to give us your impression of the differences in the way they approached this; the whole area of foreign affairs.

(Mrs. Rogers: “You've never served under Nixon.”)

ROGERS: I never served under Nixon. I never had anything to do with foreign policy under Reagan, except for the Bipartisan Commission.

My sense about Kennedy—and I hope this wasn't too colored by youthful enthusiasm—was that he had a real sense of the human dimension of the foreign policy problems that he was dealing with, in Latin America in particular. I think the people of Latin America were something vivid for him. I know they were for Bobby, whom I knew much better than President Kennedy. Poverty for Bobby Kennedy, I think, as was also true of President Kennedy, was a searing reality, something that concerned him enormously. Not only in terms of the extent to which he believed, and I think he did believe, that it presented a fertile ground for the spread of communism, but it was a tragic experience for him just because it was a personal tragedy for so many millions of people in the hemisphere. And he felt deep compassion for them, and communicated that, and hence was able to bring to foreign policy, at least in the Americas, which was the one part I saw, a deep sense of personal commitment, and almost religiosity of feeling that we were carrying out the ideal role of the United States in the world in the best way possible and in ways which were ennobling to the United States.

Johnson, I think, continued that. I saw him a fair amount during '64 and '65, I think he also had a deep and abiding sense of the human reality. But he brought, also, to those issues a kind of cynicism, and toughness, which was charming at times. I remember at one point he had the Latin ambassadors in and gave them a speech about the accomplishments of the Alliance for Progress, and after it was all over grabbed Somoza's representative...what was his name?

Q: Sevilla Sacasa.

ROGERS: Sevilla Sacasa, and said to him over coffee at the reception, “You know Mr. Ambassador, there I was talking about building a thousand schools, and fifty thousand miles of roads, and 20,000 potable water systems, and you just sat on your hands. But when I mentioned providing a little bit of money, you were up there clapping away.” On the other hand, I think, he was, as illustrated by his reaction in the Dominican Republic, fixated on the problem of national pride, and the threat of communism in the hemisphere, which I think was vastly misguided, and I think also underlay his lamentable policies in Vietnam.

As I said, I did not work for Nixon.

Ford, on the other hand, he was extremely congenial. I think he was essentially well-intentioned, decently motivated. He had no colossal vision of foreign policy strategy. He was not, on the other hand, it seems to me, obsessed the way LBJ was with certain ghosts and fears that had no real basis in the world. And he had the wisdom and sense, it seems to me, to delegate foreign policy responsibility to Henry. It was always an astonishment to me, the relationship between the President and the Secretary of State at that time. I remember during the Rhodesian crisis Henry and I went to Johannesburg. The United States, mind you, at the time had a policy of non-recognition of the Rhodesian regime of Ian Smith, who was then Prime Minister. So we had had no relationships since 1965. This was ten years when there hadn't been one word passed between a U.S. representative, and a representative of the Rhodesian government. Henry and I were meeting with Vorster, who was the Prime Minister of South Africa, and essentially Vorster said, “Okay, I've got Ian Smith to agree to majority rule as a method, and he's going to resign as Prime Minister of Rhodesia, and open the way for majority rule in the country. But he insists on one thing, and that is the opportunity to meet you directly.” And Henry, much to my astonishment said, “Yes.” And, indeed, Vorster produced Ian Smith within a matter of a few minutes, and there was the Secretary of State talking with the Prime Minister of Rhodesia without ever consulting the President. He later informed the President that he had at a stroke changed fundamental U.S. policy with respect to Rhodesia, without

any consultation in Washington whatsoever. Quite remarkable. I can't think of any other Secretary of State who would have done that without consulting his President.

Q: What was the President's reaction?

ROGERS: Oh, fine, no problem. Interestingly enough, in that respect, when I first came into office with Kissinger, at that point Nelson Rockefeller was Vice President, of course, and he had had a long record of deep interest in Latin America, and, of course, Henry had worked for him, and Nelson had sponsored him and supported him throughout. So it was a long and cordial relationship. But Henry went out of his way to assure me that, if I became Assistant Secretary of State, he would protect me against any invasion of my authority by Nelson Rockefeller. Thus illustrating once again Henry's insistence that, by god he was going to run the foreign policy of the country, and not either the Vice President or the President.

Carter, well, one has to say about him what others have said. He was extremely interested in the details. When I came back from my mission in Salvador and met with the President, we went on for about an hour and a half. He wanted to look at all the evidence with respect to the murder, photographs of the car, the kinds of detail that even the Assistant Secretary of State might pass off. But Carter was the desk officer when he got involved in a particular foreign policy. But a congenial and very hard working, and sincere and intense man whose ideals and instincts, I think, were extraordinarily humane, and decent, and progressive.

Q: Reagan?

ROGERS: A congenial dope. I never saw him on any occasion where his attention span was more than two and a half minutes before he would interrupt the person trying to explain the foreign policy issue to him with Hollywood anecdotes, or some observation about something utterly irrelevant to the issue.

Q: You have been sort of an inner and outer in foreign affairs. How do you keep yourself current on developments in Latin America, and other areas?

ROGERS: Well, it seems very natural, in part because I'm forced to it as a result of both my law practice, and my vice chairmanship of Kissinger Associates, Inc., which does a lot of consulting and advice about affairs in the hemisphere. Mechanically how? Lots and lots of reading, not only three or four newspapers, but also The Economist, Foreign Affairs, everything one can lay one's hands on, publications of all the think tanks around Washington. Its an enormous amount of literature which is available. And then, on specific issues, direct consultation with people in the Congress, what's happened in the AID appropriation bill. Last week with respect to Indonesia, I had to find about, talk to somebody up on the Hill with one of the committees. The Department of State officials are very open about consultation.

Q: Give us your general impression of how United States runs its foreign affairs. The role of the State Department, other departments, Congress, the White House, etc.

ROGERS: At the moment my view is rather pessimistic for the following reasons. One, I think the United States has been behind the curve. That's not a totally damning indictment because the curve has been very steep and changing lately, so its been hard not to stay ahead. But, I think U.S. foreign policy has been marked by a lack of strategy in recent years. The major events of foreign policy, of course, have been accidental, and surprising, e.g., the invasion of Kuwait and the Gulf War.

Secondly, at the present time, there's no question but that Congress is enormously intrusive in foreign policy, and, I think, for petty and personal reasons. When one looks at the behavior of the appropriations subcommittees with respect to aid, it's overwhelmingly obvious that the denial of assistance in a number of cases where the committee has knocked out proposals, has been on the basis of the chairman's attitude about the Under Secretary of the Treasury, David Mulford. And the consequences have a considerable

impact on our foreign relations, and our reputation for consistency and coherence in foreign affairs, which really is the gist of leadership in the world.

Thirdly, I think it's remarkable how narrow the decision- making circle is in the Department of State at the present time, concentrated on the seventh floor with a handful of people who are close to Baker. In contrast, with a much more collegiate, much more wide-spread effort of which I was a small part during the 1970s when, as I say, Henry relied on professional Foreign Service officers as regional assistant secretaries, where he relied enormously on the whole structure of the Department, the sixth floor, and well below it for staffing up of major issues. And I think the concentration of decision-making power in a few hands is a very dangerous thing. My sense is that the seventh floor is much too cut off from the flow of constructive ideas from the professionals in the Foreign Service international affairs area, or men about to be.

So on those three counts I'm not very optimistic. As a generality, however, I will say that I think this country manages its foreign relations at a higher level of excellence than any country in the world.

Q: Going back to something you raised in your book, you made the point in the book of the importance of a very strong role for the ambassador in running all the programs in that country, etc. Do you still believe that given modern communications, etc., there is a need for a strong role, or principal role for the ambassadors?

ROGERS: Yes, a strong role in the sense of being the man in charge of everything we do in that country. It's clear enough that modern communications, and transportation, has made foreign capitals more accessible to Washington, and the relationship of ambassadors to Washington necessarily has changed, although not all that remarkably. But I do think that my view is that it must be the ambassador who is responsible for, and is in total command of, everything that our representatives do in country.

Q: Let me ask you sort of a wind-up question. You did so many things in the foreign affairs area, and hopefully you will continue to participate in that but, what up to now, what particular thing that you've done has given you the greatest satisfaction? Want me to stop so you can think?

ROGERS: Wow, yes, stop so I can think. I've never thought about it.

I think I would have to answer, in a very generic way, because as I think back over all the incidences of my engagement in national relations, none of them was markedly more enjoyable than any other. I think, what I would have to say is, that the greatest satisfaction or pleasure that I got out of my engagement was, to represent the United States in matters in which we were promoting a mutual and shared interest with other nations of the world. Most particularly in terms of representing the United States in its support for constructive efforts for economic development and political change. The fact that one has an opportunity to do that in so many different contexts, starting with working with the Economic Development Administration in Puerto Rico; $25 million of quick emergency relief in the crisis in the Dominican Republic; organizing the collegiate effort in the CIAP in Sao Paulo in '63; even the North-South Conference in Paris in 1974; even the aborted negotiations with the Cubans; the efforts to bring democracy and majority rule in Rhodesia. In each one of these instances, the real delight has been having the opportunity to represent, and speak for the United States, in the search for a common ground and common good, a broader interest than the narrowly defined immediate concerns of this country; and to assist and help the other nations of the world in their struggle for self-determination, and democracy, and a decent life for their citizens, that I have found satisfying throughout my career.

The world is not just a struggle for short term narrow interest. This country has a major leadership role, has had that role throughout my lifetime, and will continue to have it for as far as I can see in the future. We therefore have, I think, a major responsibility, a trusteeship if you will, for not just our own citizens, but for the common good of the world.

And to play a small role in that, I think, in any way, at any time, in any particular event, is a great opportunity and the real satisfaction that I've had in being involved in the public affairs of the country.

Q: Thank you Bill. Would you like to make any other comments about the Service, or anything of that nature?

ROGERS: Well, I think, as Scotty Reston said in his recent book, and his recent lecture at Georgetown, I think the Foreign Service of the United States—I can name individual after individual—the president of Lockatour for one, Harry Shlaudeman, Warren Zimmermann, Larry Eagleburger, hosts and hosts of really colossally and noble selfless people who have dedicated themselves and their lives to the country with great self-sacrifice for themselves and their own families, and their own comfort, and their own livelihoods. They are, I think, the best trained Foreign Service in the world. In some ways the least rewarded, and they are by and large, I think, of a group the most remarkable cadre of men and women that I've had the opportunity to work with in my professional career. I think they are unsung heroes of this country, and its always been my judgment a great honor to work with them.

Q: Thank you very much.

End of interview